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June 5, 2007

Kathleen Drew and Jennifer Hennessey  
Governor's Office and  
Washington State Department of Ecology  
Sea Program  
PO Box 47600  
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Dear Kathleen and Jennifer,

Thank you for making a presentation to the Northwest Straits Commission last week on the West Coast Governor's Agreement on Ocean Health. It was nice to see you both again and I enjoyed learning more about the Agreement that was signed last September. As I mentioned at the meeting, I believe the Agreement provides a unique opportunity for California, Oregon and Washington to work together on the joint recovery of declining populations of marine invertebrates, fish, birds and mammals.

Although the US Endangered Species Act provides a mechanism for Federal listing of marine species, California, Oregon and Washington also list state threatened, endangered, and candidate species. This is important for three states because of the scenario where species declines are significant within a state's jurisdiction but declines are not wide-spread enough to warrant Federal listing. Additionally, the ability for a state to list species provides an opportunity for the state to move forward with a listing and recovery plan more rapidly than the Federal government, such as was the case with Washington State's listing of killer whales preceding the US Federal listing of the Southern Resident killer whale population. Furthermore, all three states have species that are in decline, but are not listed by Federal or State jurisdictions.

California, Oregon, and Washington have numerous marine species in decline, the populations of which would benefit from a tri-state effort to coordinate recovery efforts. This includes state listed and non-state listed species. In some cases, species recovery efforts are in place in one state, while harvest is still occurring in another state. Examples of this include the Northern abalone, a marine invertebrate and Surf scoters, a sea duck. Work done in the Puget Sound Georgia Basin marine ecosystem has shown that comparing and coordinating species recovery efforts between jurisdictions permits cross checking of species of concern between jurisdictions, suggests where more research is needed and



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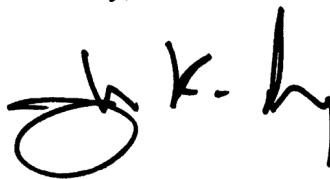
highlights areas where trans-jurisdictional approaches could benefit species recovery (Brown and Gaydos, 2007). Coordination between California, Oregon and Washington will enhance species recovery efforts and ultimately advance the three state's mutual interest in protecting and restoring ocean and coastal habitats, ensuring clean coastal waters and beaches, reducing adverse impacts of offshore development, and promoting the effective implementation of ecosystem-based management of our oceans.

My specific recommendations are as follows:

- Have the California Department of Fish and Game, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife compile and compare lists of marine invertebrates, fish, birds and mammals that are in decline or are state listed as threatened, endangered, of concern, or are candidates for state listing.
- Have representatives from each state's natural resource agency jointly go over the lists so see where states might need to examine status of specific species, identify where more research is needed, and outline species and mechanisms for greater trans-jurisdictional efforts to recovery species.
- Develop inter-state agreements identifying specific species requiring tri-state recovery efforts and defining mechanisms for coordinating these efforts.

Thank you for your efforts to improve the health of our oceans as well as for the opportunity to provide comment. Please feel free to contact me by phone (360-376-3910) or e-mail ([jkgaydos@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jkgaydos@ucdavis.edu)) if you have questions or would like to further discuss this concept.

Sincerely,



Joseph K. Gaydos, VMD, PhD  
Regional Director and Wildlife Veterinarian

Enclosure:

Brown, N. and J. K. Gaydos. 2007. Species of concern within the Georgia Basin Puget Sound Marine Ecosystem: changes between 2002 and 2006. *In* Proceedings of the 2007 Georgia Basin Puget Sound Research Conference, Vancouver, BC, March 2007

CC: Dr. K. V. Gilardi, SeaDoc Society Executive Director



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